

Kiel Farmstead, House  
East Side, Illinois Route 4  
One-half Mile South of U. S. 64  
Vicinity of Shiloh Valley  
St. Clair County  
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1186-A

HABS  
ILL  
82-SHVA.V,  
1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

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## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### KEIL FARMSTEAD, HOUSE

HABS NO. IL-1186-A

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

#### 1. Architectural Character:

The original Kiel House represents a simple one and one-half story, rectangular, double-pen log structure with gable roof. A small chimney is located off center along the rear (east) wall of the building. The three-bay facade is symmetrically balanced with a window on each side of the central entranceway. Two windows (one on the lower floor and the other in the loft) are located on each gable-end wall. With only unpainted weatherboard and its simple boxed cornice, the exterior of the house exhibits little ornamental detail. This traditional double-pen house form is often referred to as an I-cottage and represents the minimal house for sheltering a low-income family during the middle nineteenth century.

The rear kitchen addition is a long, single story, rectangular, frame structure with a shed roof. A small brick chimney is located in the southwest corner of the large single room of this wing. With the rear kitchen addition, the structure takes on a saltbox form. The exterior of both the kitchen wing and the log house originally were covered with weatherboard siding (See photographic documentation HABS No. IL 1186-1-3, A-1 to A-11 and floor plan sketches, text pages 21 through 28).

#### 2. Condition of Fabric:

The condition of the original house fabric is variable. Except for those areas beneath the windows, the original logs are in excellent, non-deteriorated condition. Water has penetrated beneath the weatherboarding along each of the window casings. Those areas along the log ends adjacent to the openings as well as the areas immediately beneath the window openings exhibit some deterioration. This deterioration is not major and does not affect the structural integrity of the building. Minimal termite damage is also present.

The frame addition has not fared as well. The wooden, hand-hewn

sill has deteriorated badly and in several places supports little of the above superstructure. Structurally, this portion of the building is not very sound.

The exterior weatherboard siding is in poor condition. Some of the siding (including the entire north end of the building) has been removed as part of the structural investigations. Along other portions of the building, the siding has weathered badly. Additionally, one of the window sashes in the upper loft story has been removed and presumably destroyed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions:

The original portion of the Kiel House measures 17'-4" wide (east/west) and 25'-6" long (north/south).

2. Foundations:

The foundations that support the Kiel House have been modified considerably over the years. The original foundation for the Kiel House consisted of log piers set directly on the ground surface. These piers were approximately 1'-7" lengths of 1'-6" diameter logs turned on end. Apparently six of these piers supported the original house. Currently, only one of the log piers exists. The second episode of foundation construction consisted of replacing the log piers with brick piers. It is suspected that this occurred when the frame addition was added onto the rear of the house (during the late 1860s or early 1870s). During this process, all but one of the original log piers were replaced. The one log pier that was not replaced was the one located centrally along the east wall of the house and probably inaccessible beneath a porch. At some later date (probably during the late nineteenth or very early twentieth century), those areas between the brick piers were infilled with brick, creating a continuous brick perimeter foundation. The final episode of foundation construction (conducted probably during the early to middle twentieth century) consisted of removing small sections of the deteriorated brick foundation and infilling with poured concrete.

3. Walls:

The walls of the original Kiel House were constructed using local hardwood (predominately oak) logs. The logs range from 12" to 15" in diameter and have been hewn to approximately 6" in width. The top and bottom surfaces of the log, as it rests in the wall, were left in the round and still retain some of their bark. The corners of the house, which originally rested on log piers, are

joined using a traditional half dovetail notch. The top plate log is a hand hewn square timber 5-1/2" thick by 6" high and is pegged into the lower log with a large wood dowel.

The interstice between the logs is narrow and filled with short, both riven and circular sawn wood fragments (approximately 2' in length). Two episodes of daubing cover the wood chinking. The original daub is a light brown color and contains an occasional fragment of what appears to have been straw. The second coat of daub, put in place after the original had weathered, is lighter in color, contains no straw and occasionally exhibits a fingerprint of the individual who had applied the daub. This daub has been placed in the voids in a manner that completely filled the space between the logs and has brought it out flush with both the top and bottom logs, a practice that was not common unless the logs were to be covered with siding. No mortar was used with either of the daubs. The presence of the fingerprints in the soft daub suggests that the latest episode of daubing has not been exposed to the weather (and thus the building has been covered with weatherboard siding since at least this point in time).

The exterior walls of the frame addition were constructed using traditional timber frame technology. The sill is a hand hewn oak timber (5-3/4" square), corner posts are 3"x4" circular sawn oak, while the studs are full-dimensional 2"x4" circular sawn oak. While the upper plate along the eastern wall is a hand hewn oak timber 5"x5" in size, the girt on each of the end walls is only 4-1/2" by approximately 4" in size. This girt, although attached by a mortice and tenon joint at its junction with the upright posts, is connected to the log wall of the original house with a large dovetail joint. Corner posts as well as studs are morticed into both the sill and upper plate. A long diagonal brace (consisting of a 2"x4" oak stud extending diagonally from the upper corner of the wall to approximately 4' from the base of the corner post) is present at each corner. The exterior of the wall is covered with lapped, tapered wood siding.

4. Structural System, Framing:

The first floor framing consists of variably sized circular sawn oak joists. These joists, which are all approximately 2" thick, range from 9-3/4" to 10-1/4" in width and are placed 2'-0" on center. Each end of the joist has a 3" notch which rests in a similar notch cut into the top of the sill log. No central support (or summer) beam is present. The flooring consists of 1"x5-1/4" tongue-and-groove pine boards.

The second story floor joists are also circular sawn oak on 2'-0" centers but are 2-1/2" thick and consistently 6" wide. These

joists were originally exposed on their lower surfaces and have been whitewashed (along with the undersides of the second story floor boards). At some later date (during the early twentieth century), these joists were covered with 3/8" beaded tongue-and-groove wainscot (attached with wire drawn nails).

The rafters on the original log house are 2-1/4"x4-1/2" circular sawn oak placed 2'-0" on center. No ridge board is present. Ceiling joists (size unknown) within the loft serve as collar beams.

Few interior wall partitions are present in this house. The single original partition located on the ground floor of this building was constructed using 7/8"x5" tongue-and-groove white pine boards placed vertically within the wall. These planks are attached to the ceiling joists on top and to a small nailer attached to the floor at the base (all attached with machine-cut nails). The current partition wall on the second floor, which dates from the middle to late twentieth century, is constructed of nominal-dimensioned fir and gypsum wall board.

The floor joists in the frame addition are a combination of walnut and oak log sleepers approximately 8"-10" in diameter. The end of each log joist has been tapered and rests on the hand hewn oak sill. The top surface of the log has been adzed flat to receive the floor boards, which are 1"x approximately 5" tongue-and-groove pine boards. Two layers of floor boards are present within the addition.

Originally, no ceiling joists were present within the frame addition, and the room was open from the floor to the rafters above. Sometime during the late nineteenth-century ceiling joists were installed approximately 7'-9" above the floor. The addition of these ceiling joists created a garreted room. These joists, which also act as collar beams, are 2"x4-1/2" circular sawn oak.

5. Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Bulkheads:

Although it is suspected that the original log house may have had a rear porch running along the length of the rear elevation, no porches are currently associated with this house. The evidence for this porch consists of joist pockets along the back sill log that are twice the width of the house floor joists and suggest that another set of joists (for a porch) projected from these pockets towards the east. A set of concrete steps dating from the early to middle twentieth century are present at both the front and rear doors.

6. Chimneys:

The present chimney in the original log house is of brick construction, approximately 16" square. It is situated slightly off-center of the eastern wall (in Room 101) and begins at the original ground surface (The room numbers were assigned arbitrarily to aid in the discussion; See attached floor plan sketches, Figures 1 through 4). It extends approximately 5' above the roof. On the exterior of the building the chimney has been parged with hard portland mortar. This chimney, which probably dates from the late nineteenth century, was not the original chimney for this house. Immediately adjacent to the brick chimney is a charred 6" diameter hole that passes through both the floor and roof of the house and suggests a simple stovepipe chimney was once present. The abandonment of the original stovepipe chimney and the construction of the brick chimney occurred prior to the application of the beaded ceiling boards yet after the application of the lath and plaster wall surfaces.

A brick chimney (approximately 16" square) is located in the far southwest corner of the rear kitchen addition (Room 103). This chimney also originates at, or immediately below, the original ground surface and extends approximately 5' above the roof. It, too, has been parged with hard portland cement mortar.

7. Openings:a. Doorways and Doors:

The front door, which may be one of the few original doors remaining in the house, is a machine made, four-panel door that measures 2'-9-3/4"x6'-10" in size. The trim on both the interior and exterior is original. Hardware on this door consists of a middle twentieth-century mortice lock.

The present rear doorway, which exits from the kitchen addition (Room 103), measures 2'-8"x6'-7" and has a modern solid core, replacement door. The opening is original. The hardware on this door dates from the middle to late twentieth century.

The doorway between the log house and the frame addition was originally an exterior feature associated with the early log house. This opening, which measures 2'-8"x6'-2", has a solid-core, late twentieth-century, replacement door. It is interesting to note that the hardware on this replacement door is an older cast iron rim lock that may represent the original lock on this door. This lock is marked "D. M. & Co./New Haven" on one side and "Patented/May 5, 1863/June 7,

1864" on the other side. Both door knobs are black glazed ceramic.

The interior doorway located between the two rooms within the original log house measures 2'-6"x6'-8" wide. Although it is suspected that this was originally a plank door, no door was present at this location at the time of this research.

The door accessing the closet beneath the steps measures 1'-8"x5'-0" and is of plank construction. A simple, unmarked latch is present on the door.

The doorway leading into the upper story loft originally was located in the northern room (Room 102) of the log house. At some point in time during the later nineteenth century (probably when the rear addition was constructed), this doorway was walled over and the entrance to the stairway transferred to the kitchen addition (Room 103). The door currently on the stairway leading into the upstairs rooms may actually represent the original door removed to this location. It measures 2'-4"x6'-6-1/2" and is of plank construction (three tongue-and-groove planks joined by two 1"x6" nailers using machine-cut nails). The current rim lock is marked with the words "ADAMS, M'KEE & CO./NO 13". A ghost of an earlier rim lock indicates that the original lock measured 2-1/4"x3-3/4". The current lock strike, which probably was not associated with either of these two rim locks is marked "PATD FEB 24 57". The door has pressed metal doorknobs typical of the twentieth century.

The door leading into the cellar was built into the floor of the rear kitchen addition (Room 103). The two-part door is of plank construction and hinged on both sides. One side measures approximately 1'x4' and the other 2'x4'.

b. Windows and Shutters:

The windows in the first floor of the original log house measure 2'-10"x4'-4-1/4". The sill is situated 2'-4" above the floor. Currently, the windows are one-over-one double hung sash. The upper story windows measure 2'-3-1/2"x3'-9-3/4". The sill of these windows is 3'-9-1/2" above the floor. The windows in the rear frame addition to this house, which are also one-over-one double hung sash, measure 2'-4"x3'-9", and the sill is 2'-8" from the floor. It is suspected that the original window sash were multi-pane (probably six-over-six double hung sash). None of the windows in this house contain original glass.

8. Roof:a. Shape, Covering:

The original log house has a gable roof with a slope that approximates 8 in 12. The roof is covered with circular sawn wood shingles that are attached to 1"x16" circular sawn, locally procured softwood planks. The rear kitchen addition has a shed roof with a slightly lower pitched roof (with a slope of approximately 7 in 12). This roof is covered with the same circular sawn wood shingles attached to 7/8"x variable width (10-12" wide) circular sawn locally procured softwood nailers.

b. Cornice, Eaves:

The eaves have plain wood rakes approximately 1"x6" and fascia boards. No gutters are present on this house.

c. Dormers, Cupolas, Towers: NoneC. Description of Interior:1. Floor Plans:a. First Floor Description:

Entry into the original log house is made through either a front or rear door. Whereas the rear door originally appears to have had a long porch, the front door has only a stoop. Both doors entered into a large multi-purpose kitchen, dining, and living room (Room 101) which measures 14'-2"x16'-0-1/2" in size. The ceiling height in this and the adjacent room is 7'-10". A window is located in both the southern and western walls of this room. Additionally, a brick chimney is located near the northeast corner of this room and marks the approximate location of the original cooking stove. That area between the chimney and plank interior wall was enclosed as a built-in cabinet during the early twentieth century (evidenced by the presence of wire drawn nails). Upon the construction of the rear frame addition, it is suspected that this room functioned as a parlor or living room.

A door in the north wall of Room 101 allowed access to a bedroom (Room 102) located along the northern end of the original log house. This room measures 10'-0-1/2"x16'-0-1/2". A window is located in both the northern and western



walls of this room. Additionally, the stairs leading to the upstairs sleeping loft are located in the northeast corner of this room. Originally, the door leading to the stairs was present in this room. With the addition of the rear frame ell (Room 103), the door leading to the upstairs loft was removed from this room. This room probably functioned as a bedroom throughout the life of the building.

Shortly after construction of the original log house, a timber frame addition was constructed onto the rear of this building. The addition consists of a single room (Room 103) running the length of the house. This room measures 24'-6" long by 9'-6" wide. This room has a single window within each of the northern, eastern and southern walls. An exterior entrance door is located in the eastern wall opposite the original log house doorway. Additionally, a chimney is situated in the southwest corner of this room. With the construction of this rear addition, access to the upstairs loft was made through a doorway located in the northwest corner of the room. A trap door, originally located within the rear porch floor and now located in the floor of this addition, leads to the cellar located beneath the log portion of the house. Originally, this room was open from the floor to the rafters. At some point during the late nineteenth century, collar beams and a wood plank ceiling were added. At that time, the ceiling height was lowered to approximately 7'-9". This room functioned as a multi-purpose kitchen, workroom and washroom. Stains on the wall indicate that a wash sink and chamber pot were located along the west wall adjacent to the doorway leading upstairs. During the early twentieth century, a telephone was installed adjacent to the window in the north wall of this room.

b. Second Floor Description:

Originally, the loft appears to have consisted of one large, garreted room (Room 201) with a window in each gable-end wall. Along the side walls, the ceiling height in this room is 4'-9". Within the center of the room, the ceiling height is 7'-10". Sometime during the middle twentieth century, the single upstairs room was partitioned into two separate rooms. Throughout the life of this building, the upstairs rooms have functioned as combination storage and bedroom space. No closets are located upstairs.

c. Basement/Cellar Description:

A single cellar room is located beneath the original log

house. This room measures approximately 11'x13', has a ceiling height of 5'-7" and is accessed from a set of steps located along the eastern wall of the room. The cellar walls indicate that at some earlier date the cellar was approximately 2' shallower than its current clearance. When the cellar floor was lowered, the undermined brick walls were reinforced with concrete. The introduction of a sump pump (and associated pit) to lower the water table was necessary when the cellar floor was lowered.

2. Stairways:

Access to the upper story loft is provided by a boxed-in stairway located in the northeast corner of the original log house. This stairway is approximately 2'-9" wide and extends 5'-6" at the level of the floor. It is of plank construction. The original steps have 6-1/2" treads with 9" risers. With the addition of the rear kitchen wing (Room 103), the stairway was altered from an ell-shaped to straight stair hall.

3. Flooring:

Flooring for the first floor is narrow (approximately 3" wide) tongue-and-groove yellow pine placed over wide (approximately 5" wide) tongue-and-groove white pine. Upstairs, the flooring is 1"x5-1/4" tongue-and-groove white pine. The flooring in the rear frame addition consists of two layers of approximately 1"x5" tongue-and-groove white pine.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finishes:

The original interior wall finish within the log house consisted of exposed whitewashed log walls. Similarly, the exposed ceiling joists were whitewashed. In contrast, the plank partition wall in the original log house appears to have been painted in a similar manner as the surrounding door and window trim (with a brown wash). By the late nineteenth century, several coats of wallpaper had been placed over the whitewashed log surfaces. During the early twentieth century, the wall surfaces were lath and plastered (and apparently wall papered). At this same time, the ceilings were covered with beaded tongue-and-groove planks. By the middle to late twentieth century, these plastered surfaces had been covered with plywood paneling.

The original surface of the door and window trim appears to have been painted a deep blue color. These surfaces were later painted green (a color that persisted through much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). By the middle twentieth century, the trim had been painted white.

The original wall finish within the loft of the log house consisted of exposed log walls and rafters (unwhitewashed). During the early twentieth century, when the lower story rooms were lath and plastered, the upper story room remained unfinished. It was not until the very recent past that the upstairs was partitioned into two rooms and the walls covered with gypsum wall board.

The original wall finish within the rear kitchen addition is fairly unusual in that it consisted of exposed framing and the interior surface of the weatherboarding --all of which had been liberally covered with whitewash to a height of approximately 10'. Above that height, the log wall and rafters were not whitewashed. During the late nineteenth century, these wall surfaces were covered with tongue-and-groove white pine planks (approximately 1"x5"; attached with machine cut nails).

By the late nineteenth century, the color scheme within the house was a dramatic bright green color which covered all exposed woodwork surfaces. At least three separate coats of green paint have been applied over the bare kitchen plank wall surfaces. By the middle twentieth century, the ceilings in the main portion of the house had been painted white, but the green within the kitchen persisted until the present.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and Doors: See II.B.7.a
- b. Windows: See II.B.7.b

6. Decorative Features and Trim:

Except for the basic door and window trim, very few decorative details are present in this house. Both the doors and windows are trimmed using square 1" white pine with no attached moldings. The trim above the openings, both on the inside and outside of the structure, is pentagonal (and represents a simplified pediment).

7. Hardware: See II.B.7.a

8. Mechanical Equipment:

a. Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation:

Heating of the house was accomplished using a wood stove during the majority of the life of the building. Flue holes were accessible from every room in the house. At some point

during the early to middle twentieth century, the woodburning stoves were replaced with gas burning space heaters. The house has no central air conditioning.

b. Lighting:

Presumably, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this house was illuminated using kerosene lamps. During the early to middle twentieth century, the house was electrified. At that time, overhead lighting fixtures were added to each of the rooms. Additionally, wall outlets were also added to each room.

c. Plumbing:

At the time of the investigations, this house had no internal plumbing. An outhouse is located towards the rear of the lot. Similarly, a well is located near the northeast corner of the house.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation:

The Kiel House is situated parallel to and approximately 105' east of Illinois Route 4. A gravel lane leads from the highway to the north side of the house. Approximately 20' east of the house is the combination summer kitchen, wash house and smoke house. A middle nineteenth century barn, demolished circa 1991-92, was located approximately 60' northeast of the house. The remaining outbuilding is a shed roofed privy, dating from the twentieth century, located approximately 60' east of the southeast corner of the house. Immediately north and south of the house and its associated yard are situated agricultural fields.

2. Historic Landscape Design:

No information is available.

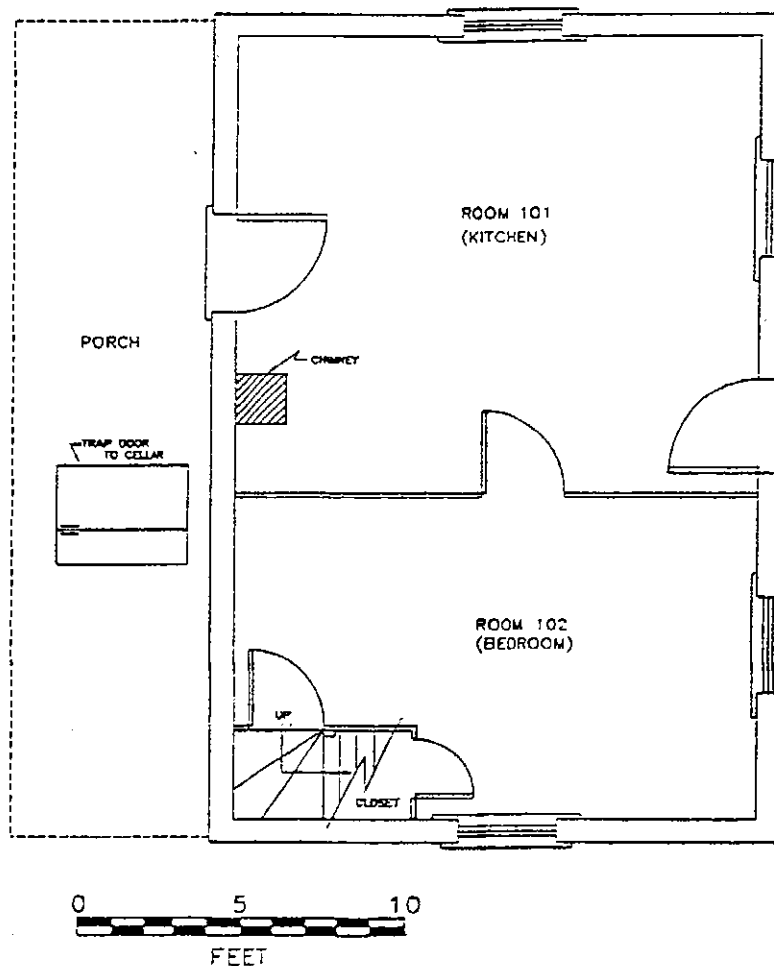


Figure 1. Ground floor plan of Kiel House, ca. 1865.  
Drawn by F. Mansberger.

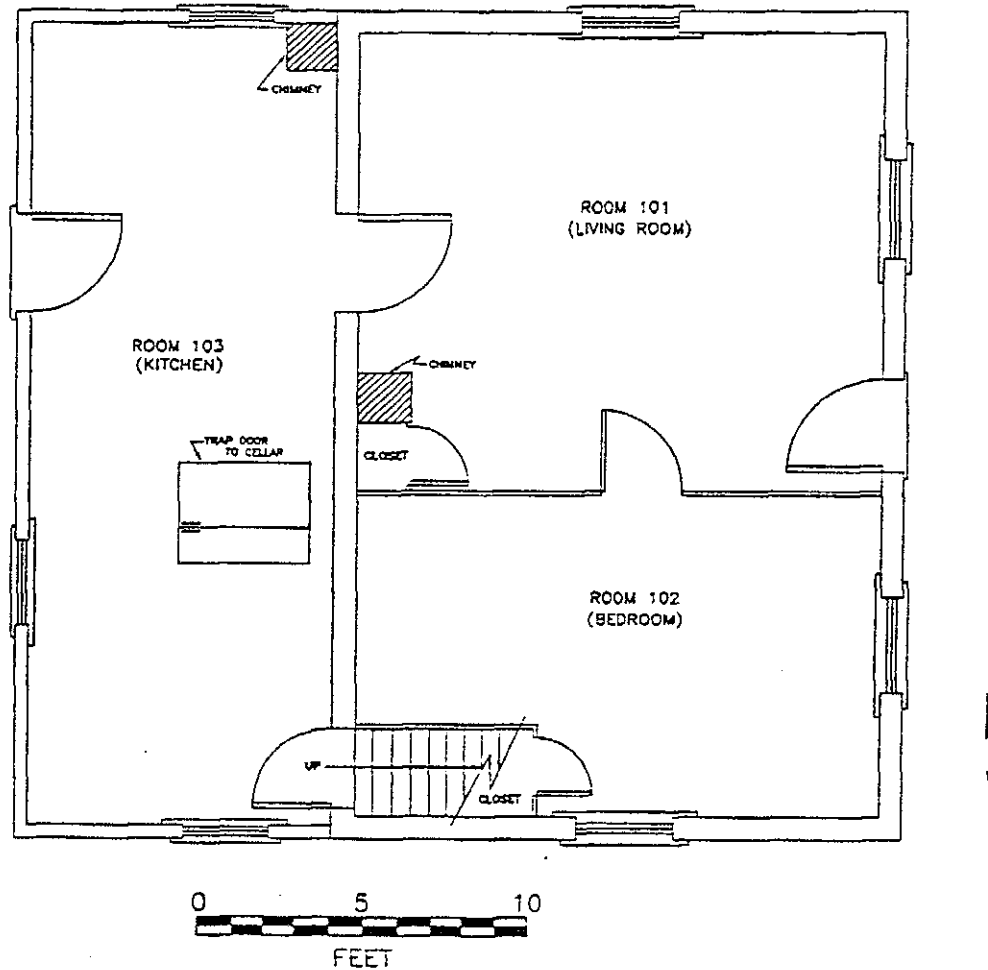


Figure 2. Ground floor plan of Kiel House, ca. 1890.  
Drawn by F. Mansberger.

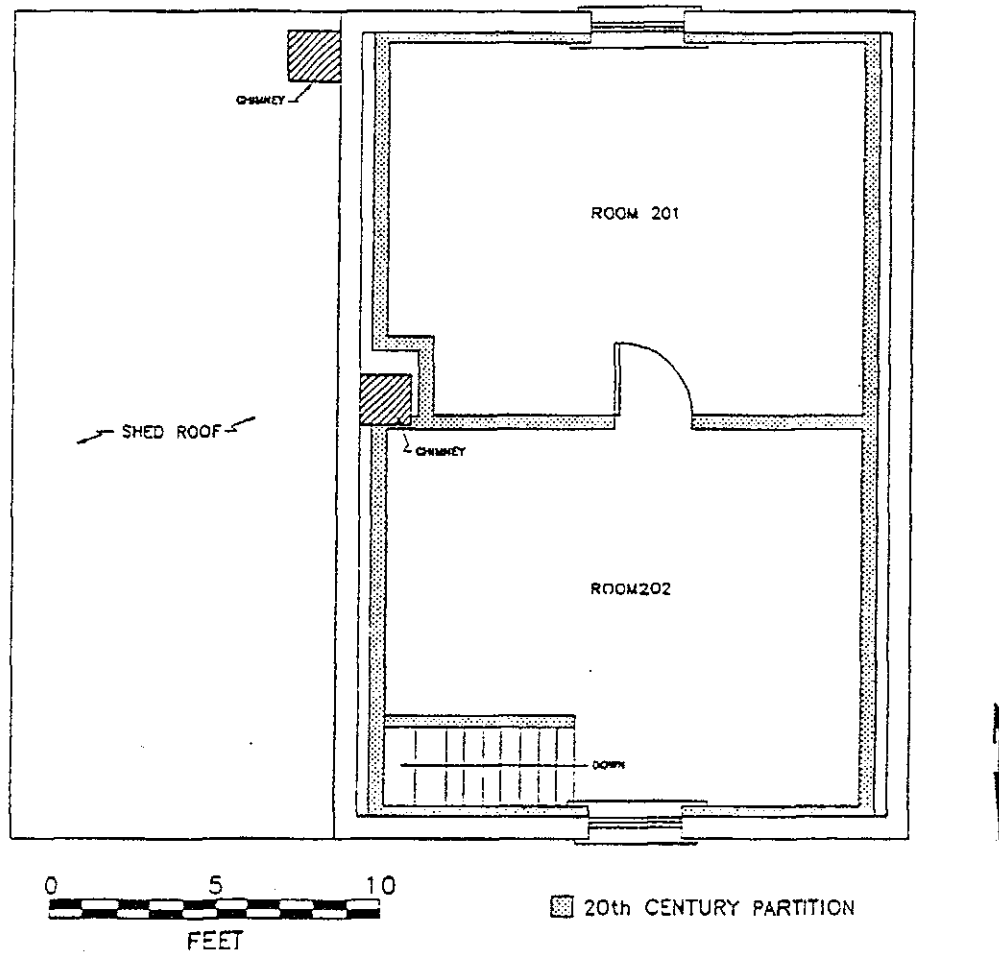


Figure 3. Second story floor plan of the Kiel House, 1994. Drawn by F. Mansberger.

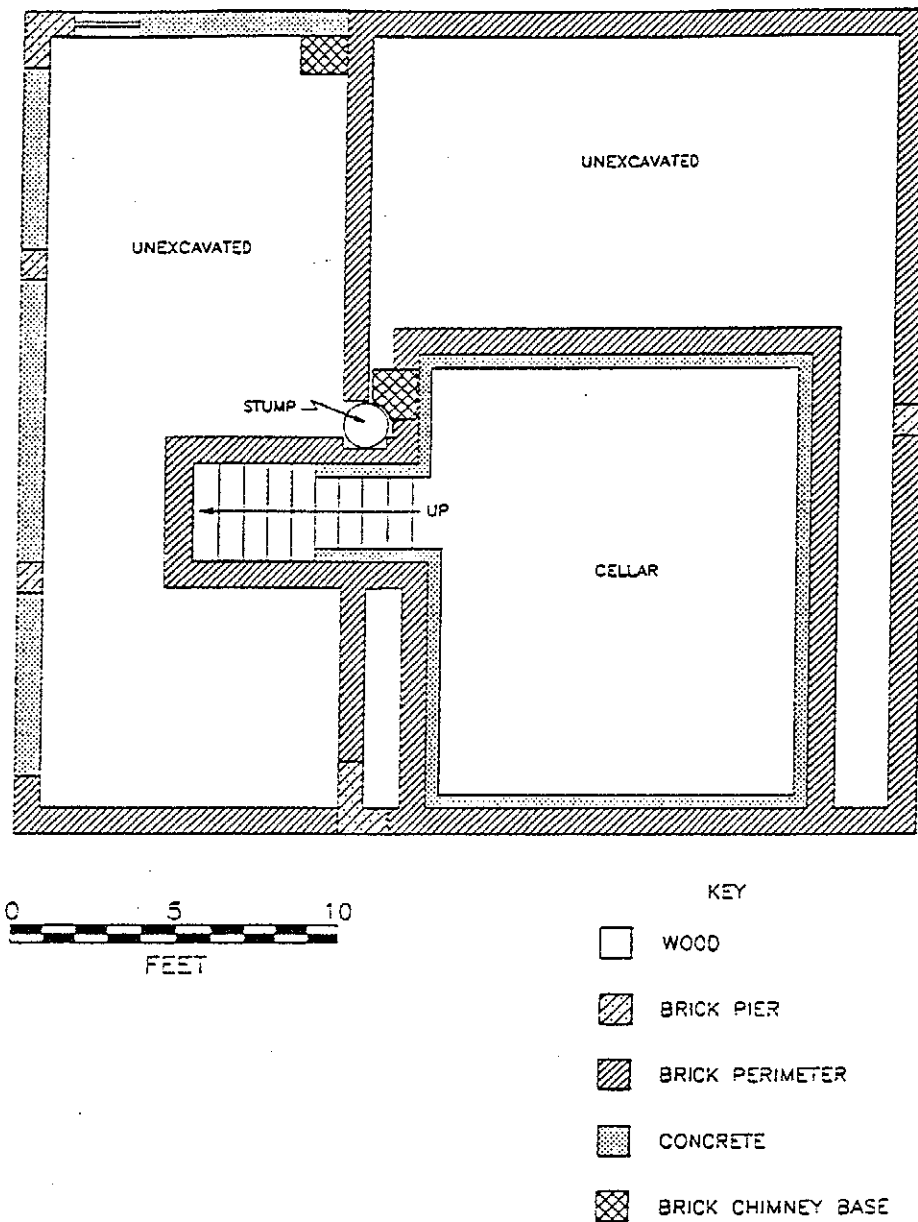


Figure 4. Basement and foundation plan of Kiel house, 1994. Drawn by F. Mansberger.



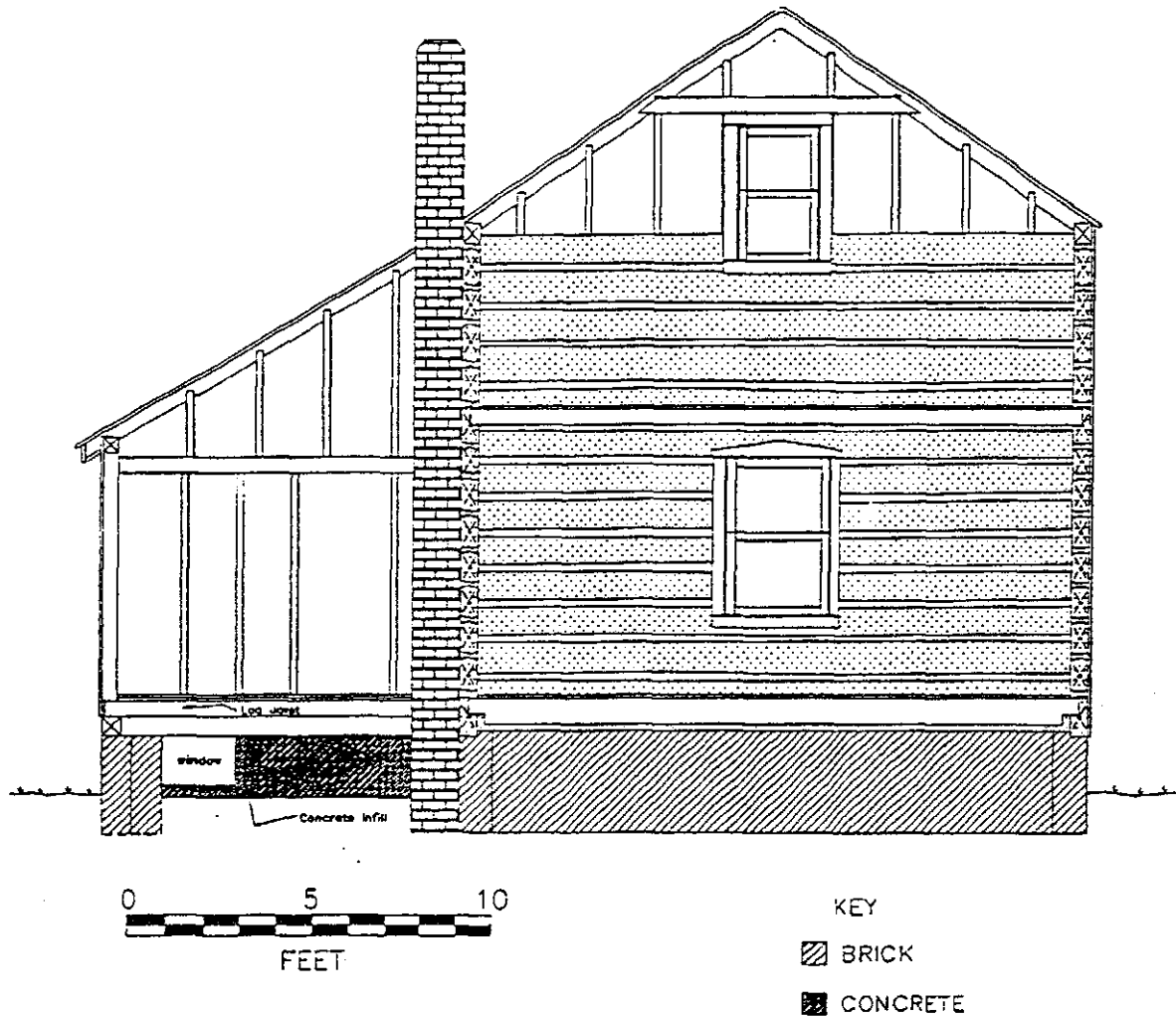


Figure 5. Sectional view through the Kiel House, 1994.  
Drawn by F. Mansberger.